

X-MEN
**FROM THE
ASHES**



X-MEN

FROM THE ASHES

#16

“PYGMALION”

Part 2

FORT WALSER, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

"UNCANNY."





IN THE
STRICT FREUDIAN
SENSE OF THE
WORD, YES.

"THAT CLASS
OF THE TERRIFYING
WHICH LEADS BACK TO
SOMETHING LONG
KNOWN TO US...

"...ONCE VERY
FAMILIAR."

M-MONSTERS...
TWO OF THEM.

OH, DO PIPE
DOWN, DR. PIERCE.
MY SOBRIQUET
IS *BEAST*.



THE ONLY
MONSTERS HERE
ARE THE BRAYING
QUARTER-WITS
OUTSIDE.

IF YOU
MUST KNOW, MY
INTERLOCUTOR HERE
IS A **MUTANT**
MIMIC.

AND A
VERY GOOD
ONE.

→SNF!← BUT
THIS ISN'T MERE
BROWERIAN MIMICRY, IS
IT...? NOT LIKE MYSTIQUE.
THIS IS MEMORIES...
BEHAVIORS.

HIGHLY SPECIALIZED
MIRROR NEURONS,
UNLESS I'M GRAVELY
MISTAKEN.

I HADN'T
GIVEN IT A GREAT

GIVEN IT A GREAT
DEAL OF THOUGHT
UNTIL JUST A MOMENT
AGO, BUT YOUR
REASONING
IS SOUND.





ARE YOU
STILL YOURSELF,
OR DO THE IDENTITIES
OF THE INDIVIDUALS
YOU MIMIC ENTIRELY
SUBSUME YOUR
OWN?

**NN! NOT
ENTIRELY.**

**BUT SOME
PERSONALITIES CAN BE...
OVERWHELMING.**



YOU KNOW,
I HATE TO PUT A PIN
IN SUCH A SCINTILLATING
CONVERSATION, BUT I FEAR
THIS BUILDING IS ABOUT
TO COLLAPSE
AROUND US.

PERHAPS WE
SHOULD ADJOURN TO
LESS *PRECARIOUS*
SURROUNDINGS?

NNN!
A CAPITAL
IDEA.

A comic book panel featuring a man in a light blue suit and red tie. He has a shocked expression with wide eyes and a mouth open in a scream. His right hand is raised, pointing his index finger upwards. His left hand is clutching his head, with visible blood on his forehead and temple. The background is a bright, fiery orange and yellow. Two speech bubbles are present: one at the top left and one in the middle left. The bottom of the panel shows the blue and green fabric of another character.

WAIT.

WE CAN'T
LEAVE *HIM*
HERE.

THIS IS A
GOOD TOWN FULL
OF *GOOD* PEOPLE.
WE DON'T HAVE
MONSTERS
HERE!

...



WHY NOT?
HE **ATTACKED**
ME.

WAIT,
WAIT...DON'T
TOUCH ME!





YES, HE
ATTACKED
YOU.

BUT
WE'RE THE
X-MEN...





...WE DO THINGS
DIFFERENTLY.



AND?

NOT MUCH. A PERSONALITY SUBSTRATE,
A FEW HANGNAIL MEMORIES, BUT
OTHER THAN THAT...

DID YOU
HAPPEN TO GET A
NAME DURING YOUR
PSYCHIC SCAN,
PSYLOCKE?





MMM-
MM.

NO NAME.
NO GENDER.
NO SEX. YOUR
MIMIC'S A BLANK
SLATE.

BLANKSLATE.
THAT'S NICE.





THE GOOD NEWS IS, THEY LOSE THE MEMORIES--WHICH ARE FRAGMENTARY AT BEST--OF THE INDIVIDUAL THEY'RE SIMULATING ALMOST IMMEDIATELY.

SO WE DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT OPERATIONAL SECURITY.



AND THE
BAD?

THEY'RE IN
PERPETUAL
EXISTENTIAL
CRISIS.



A comic book panel set in a room with a tiled floor and a large window on the right. Cyclops, in his yellow and blue X-Men uniform with his visor on, stands on the left with his arms crossed. Wolverine, in his blue and yellow X-Men uniform, is crouched on a swivel chair in the background, looking towards the other two. Jean Grey, in a black and purple X-Men uniform, stands on the right, pointing her right index finger towards Cyclops. Three speech bubbles are present: one from Wolverine at the top, one from Jean Grey on the left, and one from Cyclops at the bottom.

HMM.

NO! I DON'T
NEED TO BE A
TELEPATH TO KNOW
YOU'RE ALREADY
THINKING ABOUT FIELD
DEPLOYMENT,
SCOTT.

THAT IS
AN INTENSELY
VULNERABLE PERSON
IN THERE. I
FORBID IT.

A close-up of a yellow-gloved hand, likely belonging to the character Psylocke, reaching out with fingers spread. The hand is positioned against a solid red wall. To the left of the hand is a vertical blue-grey structure, possibly a door frame or wall panel. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows on the glove.

JUST LET
ME TALK TO THEM,
PSYLOCKE.

The scene shifts to a room with light blue walls and several horizontal red pipes. Scott Summers is visible in the lower-left corner, looking towards the right. The room appears to be a utility or maintenance area.

HI. I'M
SCOTT.

HELLO, SCOTT.
DID YOU TALK TO
JEAN TODAY?



CLEAN TODAY!

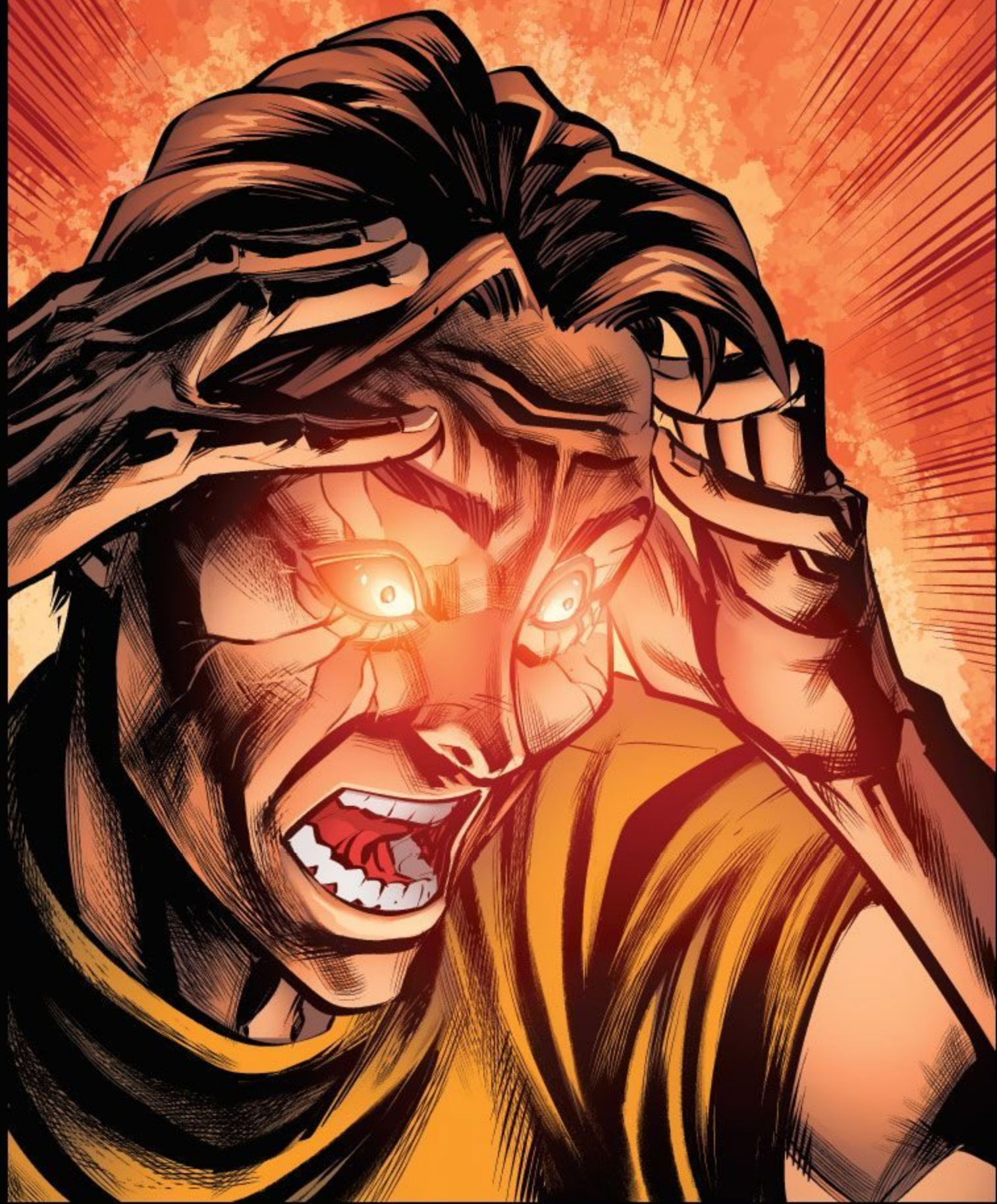
I...

THAT'S
REALLY NONE
OF YOUR...

WAIT. WHY DO MY
EYES HURT?

NO! SHUT
THEM! QUICKLY,

BEFORE--





"THAT COULD HAVE
GONE BETTER."



THEY HATE
ME. EVERYBODY
HATES ME.

A high-angle shot of Wolverine in a laboratory. He is wearing his signature yellow and orange X-Men uniform and is crouching on a grey tiled floor. In the background, there is a computer workstation with a monitor and keyboard, and a white lab coat hanging on a stand.

NONSENSE.
YOU WILL FIND THAT
MY FRIENDS' LATITUDE
OF ACCEPTANCE
IS WIDER THAN
MOST.

A close-up of Beast (Hank McCoy) in a white lab coat. He has blue fur, yellow eyes, and is wearing his signature goggles. He is holding a blue folder or book with his right hand, which has long claws. His expression is serious and slightly menacing.

YET YOU
WORRY THAT THEY
WILL ULTIMATELY REJECT
YOU, BEAST. MAY I
ASK WHY?

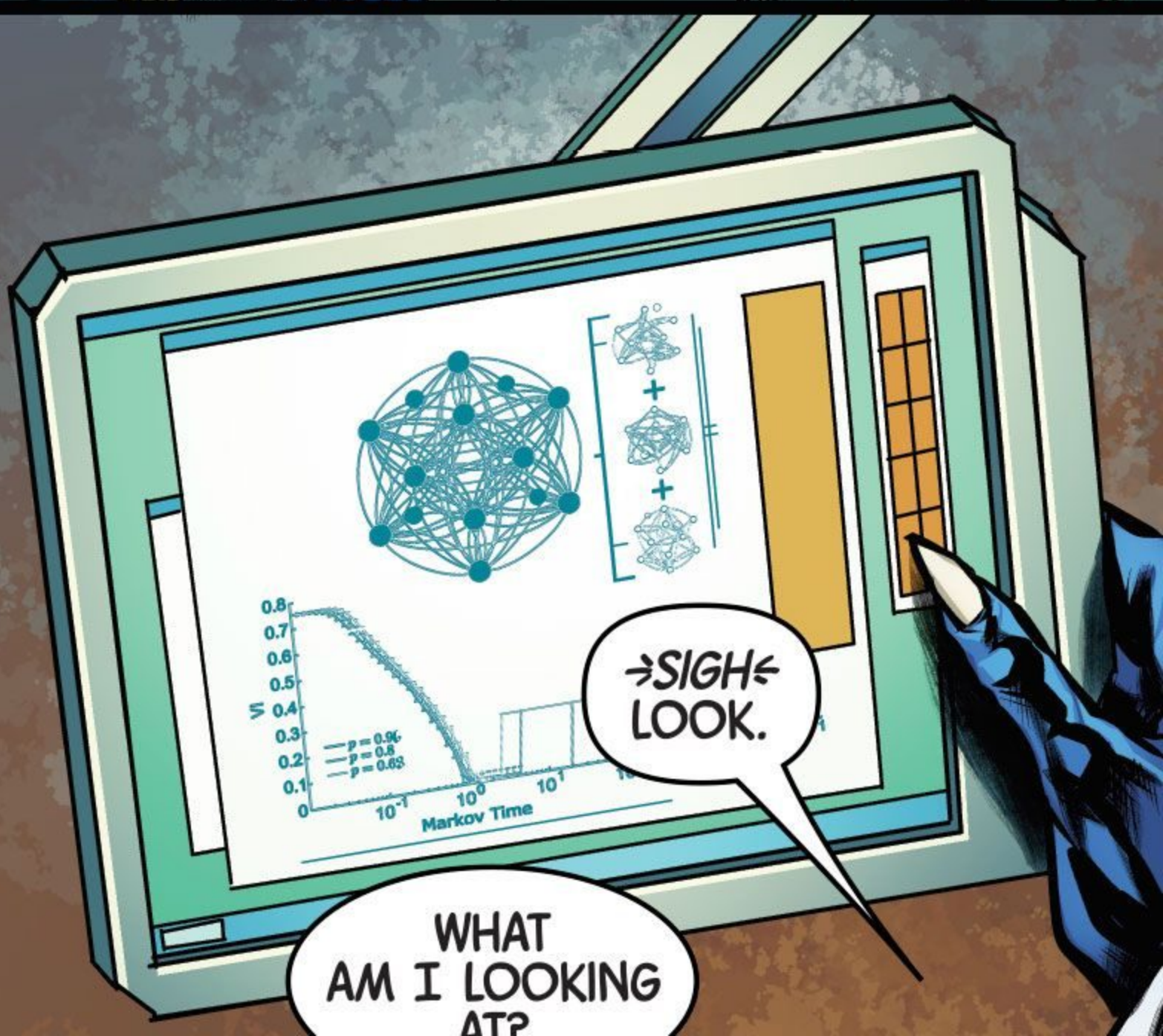
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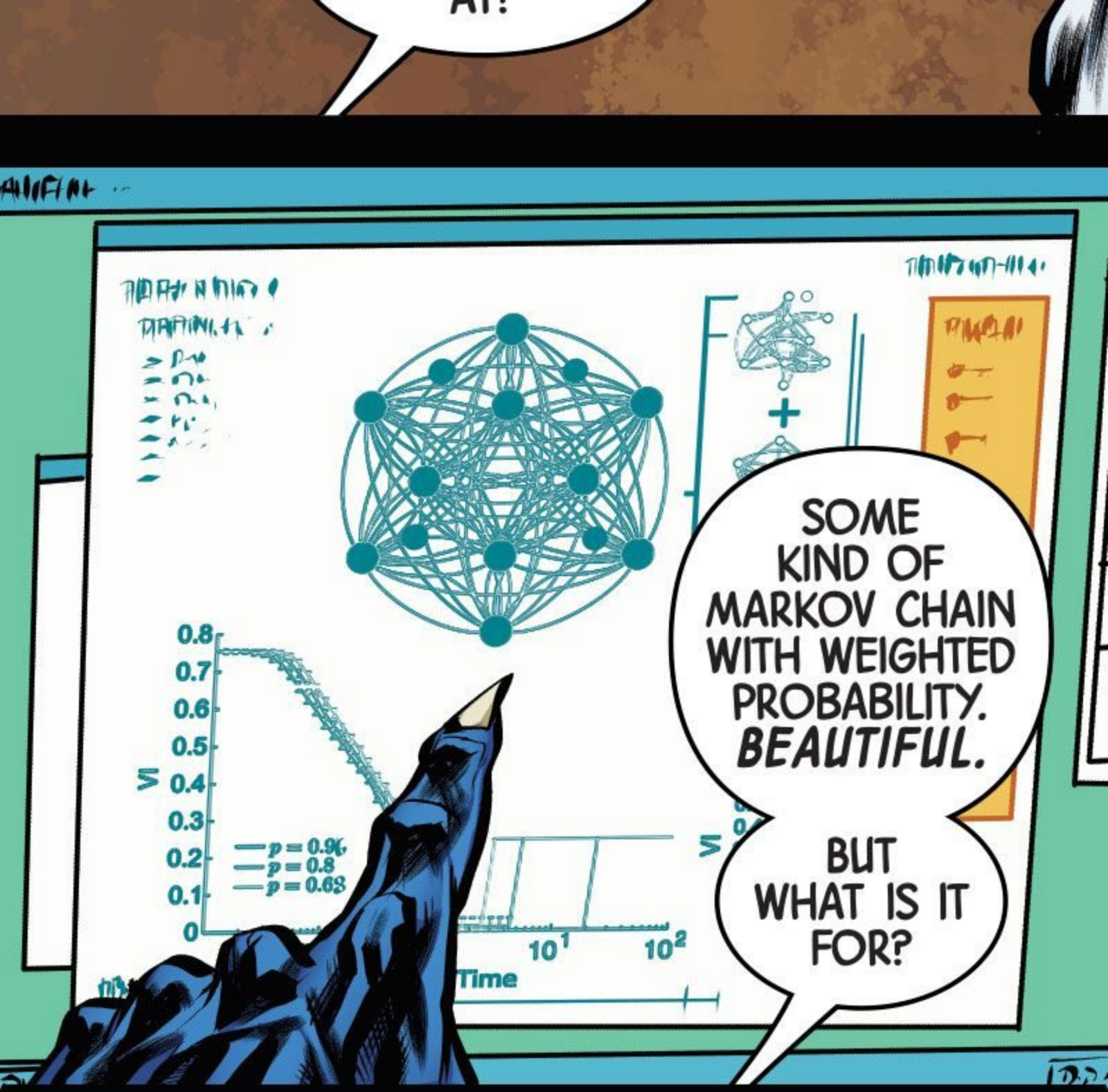
PERHAPS
THIS ISN'T THE
BEST TIME.



YOU'RE--**NN!**--
AFRAID OF YOUR
OWN NATURE, BUT
THERE'S NOTHING IN
YOUR MEMORIES
TO INDICATE THAT
SUCH A FEAR IS
WARRANTED.

YOU'VE
ALWAYS
COMPORTED
YOURSELF AS A
RATIONAL AND
PRUDENT
INDIVIDUAL.





I'M TRYING
TO CALCULATE THE
PROBABILITY OF MY
BECOMING A MAD
SCIENTIST.

I HAVE
REASON TO BELIEVE
THE ODDS ARE GREATER
THAN EVENS.

I SEE.
AND IF YOU
DO?



THIS. I'M STILL REFINING IT, BUT IT'S A PRION COMPLEX CODED WITH A COMPLETE PSYCHOBIOLOGICAL IMAGE OF ME AS I AM NOW.





A RESTORE
POINT FOR YOUR
PERSONALITY TO BE
USED IN CASE OF
EMERGENCY.

PRECISELY.

IT'S A
TERRIBLE MOMENT,
ISN'T IT...



...WHEN THE
ILLUSION OF STABILITY
FALTERS.

...

I THINK
I'M GOING TO
TURN IN. LONG
DAY. GOOD
NIGHT.

PLEASE LET
ME SLEEP NEAR
YOU.

I DON'T
WANT TO BE
ANYONE ELSE
TONIGHT.





"...I SNORE."





A comic book panel showing Wolverine from the chest up. He is wearing his signature orange t-shirt with a black 'X' logo and blue gloves. He is holding a silver handgun in his right hand, pointing it towards the left. The background is a light blue and green mottled pattern.

I *LIKE*
BEING YOU, HENRY
McCOY.

A close-up comic book panel of Wolverine's face. He has a menacing expression with his eyes narrowed and a small, sharp fang visible. He is holding a silver handgun, with the barrel pointing towards the right. The background is a bright yellow and orange mottled pattern.

"A RESTORE
POINT...TO BE USED
IN CASE OF--*NN*--
EMERGENCY!"

HKKK!
GAKK! WHAT'S
HAP--NO!!!



TO BE CONTINUED!

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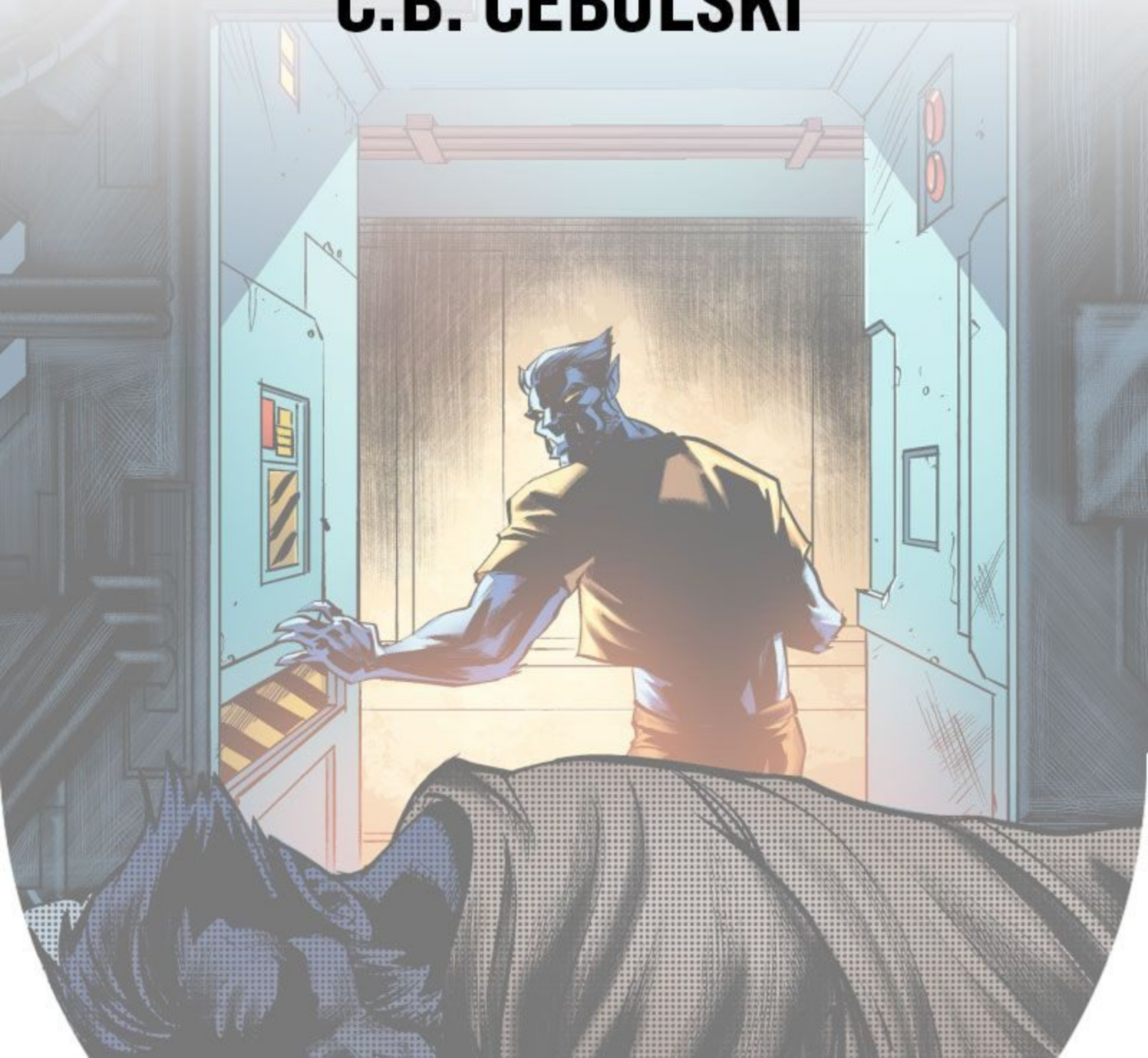
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